City of Richmond Hill

Richmond Hill, ON

Mayor David West

Pledge Summary

The City of Richmond Hill is a city located in southern Ontario. With a population of approximately 200,000, Richmond Hill is a lower tier municipality in York Region with portions of the City falling within Ontario's Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine. The City has committed to foster natural and built communities that support pollinators through the Environment Strategy and partnerships with non-profit organizations and designations.

Action Items Committed for 2023

Communications and Convening

- Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.
- Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)
- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.
- Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.
- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

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- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor David West	2026	1/28/2026	
Mayor David West	2025	3/11/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor David West	2024	2/6/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor David West	2023	1/24/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor David West	2022	11/2/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor David Barrow	2021	3/24/2021	Leadership Circle

Action Items

In total, how many individuals have been reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan-Dec)? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

2488

Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0." (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)

1244 youth, 1244 adults

In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

14

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Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.

• Parks • Community Gardens • Private property (Backyards, Front Yards, School yards) • Gardens on municipal property (including libraries, heritage buildings, community centres, and offices)

How are you leveraging the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program to engage marginalized communities, such as low-income communities or communities of color?

The City currently employs a Tree Planting Prioritization Tool which considers metrics including percent vulnerable populations. This tool is used identify marginalized communities that could benefit the most from naturalization efforts and can be focused on while marketing programs which offer native trees, shrubs and wildflowers at a subsidized cost.

What was your community's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors' Monarch Pledge?

Results from recent city-wide surveys of Richmond Hill residents have indicated a strong interest in preserving and protecting the natural environment. From May to July of this year over 1300 residents were asked to rank their top 5 priorities for the city. "Protect and respect the City's natural environment and assets" was the most popular response, with 89% of participants selecting that option. In 2022 the city updated our Environmental Strategy to reflect the community's desire, defining 10 interrelated themes to focus on including local food and pollinators. The Mayors' Monarch Pledge compliments and enhances many of the programs laid out in this Environmental Strategy.

What resources have been most helpful to you thus far and what new resources would you like to see to help meet your goals? What resources would be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

Attending workshops, webinars and working groups has helped tremendously to see what actions other municipalities are taking and how the lessons they provided can be applied to Richmond Hill. More resources to connect and spend time with Collective Garden members to get to know their insights, plans and progress would be beneficial to help strengthen the community garden program. More opportunity to build up face-to-face correspondence after the pandemic years to strengthen relationships between City staff and collective/allotment gardeners.

What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year?

Richmond Hill hosts a Pollinator Working Group which contains representatives across the City from different divisions including Natural Environment, Sustainability, and Parks Operations. Since its inception in 2018, this group has met twice per year to discuss how city programs can benefit pollinators, barring the hiatus taken during the pandemic. At each

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meeting the group reviews the success of ongoing pollinator-related activities and establish a work plan to implement further innovative projects that aim to increase and improve pollinator habitats within Richmond Hill. The City's Bee City designation was renewed in 2023 complimenting and enhancing the Mayors Monarch Pledge initiatives due to similar program interests to promote healthy, sustainable habitats and communities for pollinators. The City aims to develop additional partnerships with groups and agencies interested in similar goals to enrich and support future butterfly conservation efforts. The city has also begun providing additional training to operations staff regarding invasive plant species. Staff have been taught how to ID the most aggressive, ecosystem-disrupting invasive species and how to properly remove them.

Selected Action Items

Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Webinars Tweet.jpg

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Pollinator Week Tweet.jpg

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Community Stewardship Tweet.jpg

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Bird Friendly Display.jpg

Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

Richmond Hill's website (www.RichmondHill.ca/Pollinators) provides information to residents about the essential role pollinators play in ecosystems and food production, and compiles all of the city's ongoing efforts to support our native pollinator populations. The city's participation in the Mayor's Monarch Pledge is advertised here, as is our designation as a Bee City: an honour bestowed by the likeminded Bee City Canada program which

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Richmond Hill has held since 2018. The website also suggests actions residents can take to establish and improve habitat for butterflies and bees on their properties, including a list of pollinator-friendly plants compiled by the National Wildlife Federation. In addition to the official website, Richmond Hill encourages residents to become active stewards of pollinator habitat through social media. Social media posts are used to advertise environmental stewardship events, to provide information during Pollinator Week, and to promote educational webinars. This information was also included in advertisements including in city councilor newsletters (screenshot uploaded separately). Some examples include: • Gardening Webinar Tweet (screenshot uploaded separately) • Pollinator Week Tweet (screenshot uploaded separately) • Community Stewardship Tweet (screenshot uploaded separately) The city further extended its reach through the efforts of our Sustainability team. Educational booths were hosted at summer events including the Ward 3 Family BBQ (June 7th, 2023) and Ward 6 Summerfest (June 26th, 2023) to directly engage residents with municipal environmental concerns including pollinator habitat. Throughout the summer and fall an informational display was rotated through community centres and libraries across the city, and though this display focused on creating a “bird-friendly” environment, it encouraged actions that also benefit pollinators including leashing cats and reducing light pollution. (Image of display uploaded separately) Finally, Richmond Hill’s annual Healthy Yards program capitalizes on the awareness of pollinator habitat built throughout the year by facilitating residents’ efforts to plant native pollinator gardens at their homes or in their neighbourhoods. Sun-tolerant and shade-tolerant butterfly plant kits were partly subsidized and sold at a reduced cost to encourage residents to plant these species in their gardens. The kits included several different Milkweed species in addition to other native and pollinator friendly wildflowers. For some residents this may have been the first time they considered planting these varieties in their garden, since many are used to the ornamental or limited native plant selection offered in many nurseries or big-box stores such as Walmart or Home Depot garden centers. In this way, the Healthy Yards program brought awareness to gardening with native species and what this means for the biodiversity of our urban areas. The hope is that these native plants prosper and spread in gardens for years to come - much to the residents’ and pollinators’ delight.

Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species’ need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

Date of Proclamation:

June 19-25, 2023

Title of Proclamation (i.e. – Monarch Day or Pollinator Week):

Pollinator Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Pollinator Weed Ad.jpg

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Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Rain Gardens Workshop Sign.jpg

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

In 2023 Richmond Hill expanded its partnership with the TRCA to hold ten online workshops and webinars to bring environmental stewardship advice directly into the homes of residents. Of these event, four directly addressed pollinators and their habitat: • “Beautiful Native Plants: Less Work, Less Water” (April 3rd, 2023) • “Attracting Pollinators to Your Garden” (April 29th, 2023) • “Pollinators in Peril” (June 13th, 2023) • “Planning Your Pollinator Garden” (June 17th, 2023) These workshops and webinars informed participants on the importance of native wildflowers including milkweed species to at-risk pollinators including monarch butterflies, and outlined how to create a garden that can serve as habitat for these species throughout their lifecycle. They also highlighted other benefits of planting native species to act as further incentive, including reduced maintenance and resources these plants require and the variety of blooms they provide throughout the growing season. Altogether these presentations reached 389 residents. The city’s Sustainability team also hosted informational workshops for residents. In May of this year 15 residents participated in a workshop demonstrating how to design and maintain natural rain gardens. Native, nectar-bearing plants such as butterfly milkweed and wild columbine were promoted in this workshop, as they thrive in natural environments similar to rain gardens. (Image of signage uploaded separately).

Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.

• Public Works Operations (Urban Forestry, Natural Environment and Horticulture Section, Parks Services and Infrastructure Services Section) • Parks Design • Parks and Natural Heritage Planning.

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and revisions/maintenance implemented for mowing or planting programs.

The inclusion of natural, unmown meadow spaces continues to be considered in revitalization projects of Parks in the City of Richmond Hill. As per the Environment Strategy Update, Richmond Hill included an updated “Sustainability Metrics Program Guidebook 2022” that includes a section focused on pollinators. This document is used to direct all upcoming maintenance revisions as well as decisions made for future and current parks. In 2023 this revised mowing program has been expanded, increasing the amount of

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naturalized, unmown land in Richmond Hill parks. Plans are underway to launch a pilot project at Patterson Parkette to become a native garden stocked with native perennials with little maintenance. The city's Parks and Natural Heritage Planning team ensured that future updates and developments to parks consider the needs of pollinators. The Town Park Master Plan specifies that tradition lawns with be complimented by naturalized areas consisting of native meadow species in buffer areas between parking lots and neighbouring residences. This development (expected to be completed within the next three years) will reconnect fragmented pollinator habitat and provide visual interest for visitors. Likewise a draft Master Plan concerning the revitalization of Stavert Park includes maintaining a transitional meadowland in the park leading to the forested trail network abutting it. The full text of the Town Park Master Plan can be viewed through the link below: https://richmondhill.ca/en/shared-content/resources/Final-Master-Plan---AODA.pdf

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.

• Richmond Hill Garden & Horticultural Society • Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners • LEAF • York Region Environmental Alliance • TRCA • Kids Right to Know • Harmony Habitat Garden • Forster Collective Garden

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and their monarch butterfly conservation efforts.

In 2023 Richmond Hill Blooms program continued its tradition of celebrating the beautiful, well-maintained front gardens throughout our community. Residents were encouraged to nominate their neighbours for their efforts in creating these gardens, and were directed to informational webinars that promoted native wildflower gardens. While historically this program has concluded with a nighttime gala, this year a Summer's End Garden Social was held in its stead. This event was held on the afternoon of September 9th, 2023 on the Richmond Green, creating a more casual, accessible atmosphere to accommodate a wider audience. In addition to displays from the city's Natural Environment and Sustainability sections, the Garden Social gave 10 horticulturally-focused exhibitors the opportunity to engage with and inform the public. (Photos from event uploaded separately). Gardening leaders such as the Richmond Hill Garden & Horticultural Society and the Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners provided advice for creating and maintaining gardens and offered native plants and seed packets for sale. Conservation organizations such as LEAF and TRCA informed residents about native species including pollinators and their roles in the ecosystem. This was further expanded on by community-led organizations including Kid's Right to Know, which emphasized the critical role pollinators have in food production, and the York Region Environmental Alliance, which hosted a display specifically outlining how to integrate pollinator habitat into an existing garden. Overall the Summer's End Garden Social was a major success, strengthening ties between Richmond Hill, its residents, and community organizations. Each of the over 200 participants were given a free native wildflower provided by the Natural Environment section to help foster more pollinator

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habitat in front gardens. More information on this program can be found through the link below: https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/find-or-learn-about/Richmond-Hill-Blooms.aspx

Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and associated opportunities to create monarch habitat.

Richmond Hill has continued to refer to the “Sustainability Metrics Program Guidebook 2022” developed as part of last year’s Environmental Strategy Update. Among other environment concerns, the document includes a section focused on at-risk pollinators. The guidebook engages developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders involved in planning to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat. One example is ensuring seed mixes used in naturalized portions of new developments include species crucial to the survival of at-risk pollinators such as butterfly milkweed, swamp milkweed, and New England Aster. The city considers new projects from developers, planners, landscape architects and others on a case-by-case basis and presents recommendations from the “Sustainability Metrics Program Guidebook 2022” where applicable.

Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

None

How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 50).

0

Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).

Richmond Hill is currently planning to create a mural painting at the Sussex Park Community Garden celebrating wildflowers and the pollinators they support. This will include a human-sized pair of spread monarch butterfly wings, allowing residents photograph opportunities that will further spread awareness of monarch conservation.

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

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How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

1305 native trees/shrubs and 3760 wildflowers

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

702

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

In 2023 Richmond Hill's annual Healthy Yards plant sale continued to help residents in the creation of native pollinator habitat on their property. In partnership with York Region, the city offered native tree, shrub, and wildflower species at subsided costs. Wildflowers were sold in bundled kits of either sun-tolerant or shade-tolerant species to cater to residents with different garden conditions. Each kit contained a species of milkweed as well as other nectar-bearing plants to attract a variety of butterflies, other insects, and birds. The Healthy Yards program continues to be very popular with residents and allows the city to facilitate the naturalization of private property within city limits. The city aims to expand the Healthy Yards program to include schoolyards in 2024. By connecting public and private schools with organizations dedicated to ecological education, we hope to create outdoor classrooms that will create native habitat to pollinators get children interested in the wildlife right outside their doors. Further information on the Healthy Yards program can be found through the link below: https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/find-or-learn-about/Trees-and-Yards-Healthy-Yards.aspx?_mid_=284

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

20

What species were collected or propagated?

Swamp milkweed and Butterfly milkweed

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

Richmond Hill Public Library and Richmond Hill Garden & Horticultural Society

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

Richmond Hill has implemented a seed library program, containing milkweed seeds, where residents are able to collect and donate seeds to the library. The library was active in 2023. Residents are also encouraged to "check out" seeds and incorporate them where desired. Volunteers from the Richmond Hill Garden & Horticultural Society help facilitate this library,

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often donating seeds collected from their own gardens. Native pollinator friendly species including butterfly and swamp milkweed are offered in addition to vegetable varieties. The city also gives away seed packages at various events. Each seed package contains a custom made seed mix including swamp milkweed other pollinator-friendly native perennials

Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Bird Friendly City Certificate.jpg

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Bee City Canada, Nature Canada

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

Since 2018 Richmond Hill has been designated a "Bee City" by the non-profit organization Bee City Canada. This designation recognizes the city's ongoing efforts to create pollinator habitat, educate residents on the importance of pollinators, and celebrate Pollinator Week in June. Many of Richmond Hill's Natural Environment and Sustainability efforts contribute to our status as a "Bee City", including our Healthy Yards program, Community Garden program, and Richmond Hill Blooms. On November 7th, 2023 Richmond Hill received certification from Nature Canada as a Bird Friendly City due to efforts to restore native habitat and protect local bird populations. An informational display was rotated through community centres and libraries to educate residents on threats to bird populations such as outdoor cats, and how proper environmental stewardship can mitigate these threats. Ongoing restoration projects such as the woodlot restoration at David Dunlop Observatory Park has increased the amount of viable habitat for birds in Richmond Hill, further contributing to this designation. An image of this certification has been included separately. More information on these certifications can be found through the links below: https://beecitycanada.org/city/richmond-hill/ , https://naturecanada.ca/defend-nature/how-you-help-us-take-action/bfc/

Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Burr House Community Garden, Forster Collective Garden, Gladys McLatchy Memorial Garden, Harmony Habitat Garden, Heritage Herb Centre Garden, Hill House Hospice

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Garden, Kids Right to Know Community Garden, Millennium Garden, Odeiwin Community Garden, Sussex Park Vegetable Garden, David Suzuki Foundation

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

50

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

In 2023 Richmond Hill began supporting three additional community-led gardens, bringing the city's total up to ten. While the Kids Right to Know Community Garden focuses on growing food, the remaining new gardens each provide native, nectar-bearing plants for our pollinator populations. The Odeiwin Community Garden hosts traditional medicinal plants native to the region such as sweetgrass and sage, while the Burr House Community Garden was created specifically to provide pollinator friendly habitat. These new gardens are a welcome addition to the existing pollinator gardens the city maintains. The canoe planter created at Mill Pond Park in partnership with the David Suzuki Foundation in 2021 continues to bloom with black-eyed susan, butterfly milkweed, and hoary vervain in the spring and summer. Likewise the Harmony Habitat Garden, Forester Collective Garden, and Millennium Garden have expanded their native perennial garden beds. The city has also made efforts to increase the amount of viable pollinator habitat at community vegetable gardens. This summer two container gardens, each filled with native wildflowers, were installed at the Phyllis Rawlinson Allotment Garden. In addition to facilitating the pollination of crops within the garden, this will also help connect the garden to the surrounding meadowland habitat. More information on this program can be found through the link below: https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/register-apply-or-pay/Community-Garden.aspx?_mid_=829

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

14 acres

Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.

Richmond Hill coordinates a Community Stewardship Program partnership with conservation organizations such as TRCA, LEAF, and Ontario Streams to increase the quantity and quality of native habitat within the city and give residents firsthand experience in conservation efforts. Volunteers were directed to help remove invasive species from 6 newly renaturalized sites, collecting 10 bags of invasive plant material throughout the summer. Invasive species including crown vetch, dog-strangling vine, and common buckthorn were removed with a goal of increasing the greenway system within Richmond Hill by expanding habitats on public lands. These invasive plants were removed by hand, making sure to excise the entire root mass, after which mulch was spread to inhibit the

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ability of weeds to compete with native species. The city has also begun providing additional training to operations staff regarding invasive plant species. Staff have been taught how to ID the most aggressive, ecosystem-disrupting invasive species and how to properly remove them

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

6

Please describe the educational information on the sign(s), and provide any links to externally purchased sign(s).

Richmond Hill has maintained the informational signs displayed at the Harmony Habitat and Millennium pollinator gardens. These signs let visitors know that these gardens were created specifically to provide necessary habitat to butterfly and bee species. They also bear the logos of Bee City Canada and the Mayor’s Monarch Pledge to denote the city’s certification by these organizations. The newly established Kids Right to Know Community Garden has also installed a new informational sign. This sign details the importance of pollinators to the development of local, sustainable agriculture. The city has also developed additional temporary signage for Minthorn Park and the garden surrounding the Oak Ridges Branch of the public library. These signs will be installed each winter and removed in the spring. They explain to residents that the dead plant material within the gardens has been left to provide winter pollinator habitat for insects, and provides a link to RichmondHill.ca/Pollinators for those seeking more information. All of these signs were designed in house by city employees.

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Public Works Operations (Urban Forestry, Natural Environment and Horticulture Section, Parks Services and Infrastructure Services Section), Parks Design, Parks and Natural Heritage Planning

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

Complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

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On March 25th, 2019, the City updated the Grass and Weeds By-Law (No. 31-19). Included in this revision was an exemption of the by-law for environmental sensitive areas and natural heritage lands, including floodplains, meadows, and boulevard ditches. The by-law also does not require the mowing of wildflowers on private property that are contained within clearly defined gardens. The full text of the Grass and Weeds By-Law can be view through the link below: https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/shared-content/resources/documents/Community-Standards-By-laws/1025---Grass-and-Weeds-31-19.pdf

Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Public Works Operations (Urban Forestry, Natural Environment and Horticulture Section, Parks Services and Infrastructure Services Section), Parks Design, and Parks and Natural Heritage Planning.

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

Complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

September 9th, 2023 saw Richmond Hill approve the latest amendment to the Official Plan (Policy 3.2.1.2.29) regarding land use within the city. The plan details the city’s continued commitment to increasing the percent of native plants, shrubs and trees used in the city landscaping and encouraging the use of milkweed where appropriate. The full text of the Official Plan can be viewed through the link below: https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/shared-content/resources/documents/OP_2022-Final-Updated-August.pdf

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Public Works Operations (Urban Forestry, Natural Environment and Horticulture Section, Parks Services and Infrastructure Services Section), Parks Design, and Parks and Natural Heritage Planning

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

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Complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

On July 6th, 2022 Richmond Hill updated our Environment Strategy to reflect the community's passion to protect, enhance, and restore its natural environment. The strategy defined 10 themes to guide the city's effort, one of which specifically concerns local food and pollinators. Our continued expansion of the Community Garden, Healthy Yards, and Richmond Hill Blooms programs is directly informed by the goals and guidelines put forth by the Environment Strategy. The full text of the updated Environment Strategy can be viewed through the link below: https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/find-or-learn-about/resources/Richmond-Hill-Environment-Strategy-Update.pdf

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

By-law, Education, and Enforcement, Energy and Waste

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

Complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

Richmond Hill has had a light pollution by-law (No. 63-95) since 2007, with the latest update to the policy occurring on October 12th, 2021. The by-law regulates where outdoor lights may be installed, their illumination intensity, and hours of operation. The intensity of lighting can be adjusted remotely by location. As such, it can be reduced at times of day or for certain areas such as those in proximity to wildlife habitat. The full text of the light pollution by-law can be viewed through the link below:https://www.richmondhill.ca/en/shared-content/resources/documents/Community-Standards-By-laws/1050---Protection---Light-Pollution.pdf

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